

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of the Claims:

1. (Previously presented) A system for facilitating multiplayer gaming over a computer network, the system comprising:
a computer terminal configured with a client program and a second program;
wherein the client program automatically detects when selected individuals are playing one or more multiplayer games on the computer network,
notifies a user of the games and selected individuals playing the games,
searches for and detects when one or more of the games are executing on the terminal, and
communicates data identifying the running games and the user over the computer network for receipt by selected individuals;
wherein the second program, which is separate from the games executing on the terminal, determines a connection status of the executing games and communicates the connection status to the client program; and
wherein the client program communicates the connection status of the executing games over the computer network for receipt by the selected individuals.
2. (Previously presented) The system of claim 1, wherein the client program assists the user in joining an individual in a game by running an instance of the game on the terminal and connecting the terminal to a location hosting the game.
3. (Previously presented) The system of claim 2 wherein the client program further generates a user interface that allows the user to join the individual in a game by selecting an icon.
4. (Canceled).
5. (Canceled).

6. (Currently amended) The system of claim [[5]] 1 wherein the second program comprises a layered service provider program.
7. (Currently amended) The system of claim [[5]] 1 wherein the connection status comprises an IP address hosting a corresponding game.
8. (Currently amended) The system of claim [[5]] 1 further comprising:
one or more servers adapted to receive the data and connection status and to communicate the data and connection status to the selected individuals.
9. (Original) The system of claim 2 wherein the program is further adapted to allow the user to send and receive instant messages to and from selected individuals.
10. (Previously presented) The system of claim 9 wherein the selected individuals include individuals other than the user stored on a friend list created by the user.
11. (Previously presented) The system of claim 10 wherein the selected individuals include individuals other than the user stored on a friend list created by an individual other than the user stored on a friend list created by the user.
12. (Previously presented) A computerized method for facilitating multiplayer games over a computer network, comprising:
searching for and detecting when one or more multiplayer games are executing on a user terminal;
detecting when selected individuals are playing one or more of the multiplayer games on the computer network;
notifying the user of the games and selected individuals playing the games;
detecting, by a separate program, a connection status of the executing games; and

communicating, by the separate program, data identifying the user, executing games and connection status to the selected individuals over the computer network; and assisting the user in joining an individual in a game by executing an instance of the game on the user terminal and connecting, based on the connection status, the user terminal to an address hosting the game.

13. (Canceled)

14. (Currently amended) The method of claim [[13]] 12 wherein the connection status comprises an IP address hosting a corresponding game.

15. (Previously presented) The method of claim 14 further comprising:
sending and receiving instant messages between the user and the selected individuals.

16. (Original) The method of claim 15 wherein the selected individuals comprise first individuals contained on a list associated with the user.

17. (Previously presented) The method of claim 16 wherein the selected individuals comprise second individuals included on a list, other than the user, associated with one or more of the first individuals.

18. (Previously presented) A computer-readable storage medium having computer-executable instructions for performing a method for facilitating multiplayer online gaming, the method comprising:
searching for and detecting when one or more multiplayer games are running on a user terminal;
detecting when selected individuals are playing one or more of the games on the computer network;
notifying a user of the games and selected individuals playing the games;

cause a second computer program to execute that determines a connection status of the executing games and communicates the connection status to the data processing apparatus; and

assist the user in joining one of the selected individuals in a game by executing an instance of the game on the user terminal and connecting, based on the connection status, the user terminal to an address hosting the game.

19. (Canceled).

20. (Previously presented) The computer-readable storage medium of claim 18, wherein the method further comprises:
detecting a connection status of the executing games; and
communicating data identifying the user, executing games and connection status to the selected individuals over the computer network.

21. (Previously presented) The computer-readable storage medium of claim 20, wherein the connection status comprises an IP address hosting a corresponding game.

22. (Previously presented) The computer-readable storage medium of claim 20, wherein the method further comprises:
sending and receiving instant messages between the user and the selected individuals.

23. (Previously presented) The computer-readable storage medium of claim 22, wherein the selected individuals comprise first individuals included on a list chosen by the user.

24. (Previously presented) The computer-readable storage medium of claim 23, wherein the selected individuals comprise second individuals included on a list chosen by one or more of the first individuals.

25. (Canceled).

26. (Canceled)

27. (Previously presented) A system for facilitating multiplayer gaming over a computer network, the system comprising:
a computer terminal configured with a client program and a second program;
wherein the client program automatically detects when selected individuals are playing one or more multiplayer games on the computer network,
notifies a user that the selected individuals are on the network and the games the selected individuals are playing,
searches the terminal's operating system processes to detect when one or more of the games are executing on the user's terminal and
communicates data identifying the executing games and the user over the computer network for receipt by selected individuals;
wherein the second program, which is not in communication with the games executing on the terminal, determines a connection status of the executing games and
communicates the connection status to the client program; and
wherein the client program is further adapted to communicate the connection status of the executing games over the computer network to the selected individuals.

28. (Previously presented) A computer-readable storage medium having computer-executable instructions for performing a method for facilitating multiplayer online gaming, the method comprising:
automatically detecting when selected individuals are playing one or more multiplayer games on the computer network, and notifying a user that the selected individuals are on the network and the games the selected individuals are playing;
searching the terminal's operating system to detect when one or more of the games are executing on the user's terminal and communicating data identifying the executing games and the user over the computer network for receipt by selected individuals;

executing a second computer program that determines a connection status of the
executing games and communicates the connection status to the data processing
apparatus; and
communicating the connection status of the executing games over the computer network
to the selected individuals.

29. (Previously presented) The computer-readable storage medium of claim 26 wherein the method further comprises assisting the user in joining one of the selected individuals in a game by executing an instance of the game on the user terminal and connecting, based on the connection status, the user terminal to an address hosting the game.